



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts
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Human Rights Commission Minutes 06/20/2002

Human Rights Commission

Attendance

Bill Shea
Cecilia Akuffo
Chris McGann
Esther Kingston-Mann
Jim Webster
Marlissa Brigett
Sherri Barron

Proceedings

The meeting began at 8:00. Last meeting's minutes were approved.

Complaints

Incident

A resident complained that kids used a paint gun to throw paint on her house.

Outcome

The police visited her at home and are pursuing a lead on a suspect; Marlissa called to speak with her, and will keep the Commission posted on further developments.

The resident is concerned because she has young children at the Stratton School and fears that they will be harassed by the perpetrators.

Follow-up

Melrose Hate Group attendance at HRC/town meeting

Commissioners are encouraged to visit the Massachusetts Human Rights Commission website to witness first-hand the hate group's perspective of the Melrose town meeting that they attended, and to get an idea of what their "drop" looks like –what they drop on neighborhood lawns. The group's website indicated that the Melrose meeting was very civil and essentially suggesting that it's easy to attend these town meetings, thereby encouraging attendance by their members.

It's recommended that Arlington Commissioners hold a discussion and develop a policy about how to manage a response in the event of a similar visit from the same group at one of the town meetings.

Commission discussion/questions raised:

How approach this situation?

How deal with them if they insist on speaking their views at a meeting?

Response:

They have a right to attend any meetings and not identify themselves, however, the Commission can determine the agenda ahead of time. In doing so anyone or any group that wished to speak would need to identify themselves before hand. In this way the speaker and length of time allotted for speaking will be pre-determined.

Sub-Committee**Reports**

Policies & Procedure: There will be a report next week.

Education: Nothing to report this month

Dialogs & Book Groups: Presently working with the book Raising Children In Violent Times by Diane Levin

Rapid Response/Publicity: Nothing to report this month

Planning AHRC**10th year anniversary**

No date will be set for the event until a speaker is secured.

Discussion and proposed plans:

Schedule a speaker on a weekend night.

The local event should celebrate diversity in Arlington bringing groups together in the community, through a party for example; the event will demonstrate how far the Commission's come.

The best way to secure a speaker is through personal contacts. Suggestions for speakers and ways to work with contacts are the following:

Work with contacts at Harvard University to get one of their international scholars as a speaker.

Suggested speakers:

A Nobel Prize winner

Algebra Project members

Rosa Parks

Jesse Jackson

Marchers to Washington

Dick Gregory

Piggy-back on commencement speakers

Questions raised include:

Who should be invited and why?

What is the Commission's goal?

Should the focus be on the Commission's mandate?

Should it be local, national, international, who would be most interesting and would draw a large audience?

Other suggestions:

One week following the speaking event there would/may be a panel discussion with former speakers invited back. Following the discussion there would/could be an "appreciation dinner" for the panel.

Outcomes

Marlissa will call Harvard's Institute of Politics

Kevin will work with the Fletcher School

Cecilia will speak with her personal contacts

The sub-committee will meet at the end of the summer.

Housekeeping**Reprinting of the AHRC brochure**

Calico is the name of the company on Gloucester St. used previously. They will be used for re-prints of the brochure. However, signatures need to be changed and minor changes on the form letter need to be made.

1,000 brochures will be ordered.

Print Aspects is another potential vendor and their prices will be reviewed.

Other Item

Karen Coven, the new Affirmative Action and Personnel Director will be invited to a future meeting.

Meeting for June 19th, 2002 adjourned at 9:00!
Minutes submitted by Cecilia Akuffo

NEXT AHRC MEETING SCHEDULED WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 21 AT 8:00 PM